

AN ABUNDANCE OF MERCY EACH MORNING

by Ben Goldberg

Last week we continued looking at the second bracha of Shemoneh Esrai and focused on G-d's kindness in sustaining the living. Today, we move on the end of that phrase and discuss G-d's abundant mercy in resuscitating the dead. As a reminder, the second blessing states

"You are eternally mighty, my Lord, the Resuscitator of the dead are You; abundantly able to save. [He makes the wind blow and He makes the rains descend]. He sustains the living with kindness, **resuscitates the dead with abundant mercy**, supports the fallen, heals the sick, releases the confined, and maintains His faith to those asleep in the dust. Who is like You, O Master of mighty deeds, and who is comparable to You, O King Who causes death and restores life and makes salvation sprout! And You are faithful to resuscitate the dead. Blessed are You, Ha-Shem, Who resuscitates the dead."

Today we will be focusing on the bolded text – "[He] resuscitates the dead with abundant mercy"

Last week, we explained that true kindness is to give without reason and focused on how much G-d gives to us, even though we may not be deserving of such kindness. This week, we turn our focus to G-d's abundant mercy in resuscitating the dead.

There is, of course, a literal reading of this verse. Once Mashiach arrives, G-d will, in His abundant mercy, resurrect the dead. Even if we have not lived our lives completely in sync with G-d's wishes, He still shows mercy in allowing us to take part in the future resurrection. The Talmud also tells us (Sanhedrin 90b) that we will return to this world fully clothed, providing another aspect of G-d's mercy as He allows us to return with our dignity intact.

There is also a way to interpret this phrase so that it holds meaning for us even today. As we've discussed in previous classes, we can take this mercy of resuscitation to heart if we realize G-d grants us that same privilege every morning when we wake up. It can become easy to take this miracle for granted, as each morning we rise from slumber. However, the fact that it occurs every day does not make each instance any less miraculous. Despite whatever actions we took the previous day, G-d, in His abundant mercy, resurrects us each morning.

With that interpretation in mind, and with the lessons from last class in hand, we can now view this entire phrase in an entirely new light. We say that G-d sustains the living with kindness and, as we do, we think about the abundance of kindness around us and just how much we truly have to be thankful for. And, even if we fail to appreciate all the kindness that surrounds us, we can at least

recognize the abundant mercy G-d grants us as we wake up each morning.